

V-Squared Creative Local Business Listing Optimization Checklist

Create 'Google My Business' Account

- ❑ **Name, Address, Number (NAP):**

Make sure NAP is 100% accurate and matches exactly with info on website and any other pages. If the business is not a physical location, then set correct 'service area'.
- ❑ **Website link:**

not necessary, but absolutely better to have one.
- ❑ **Select category of business:**

When selecting business category, specific is always better than general. It's okay to use a more broad name for the 'primary category' when setting up the account. But, after the account is set up, be sure to add additional categories that are more specific and explain all the products and services that the business has to offer. (ex: 'gluten free bakery' is better than 'food').
- ❑ **Verify location:**

Google will send a verification code in the mail to the business location entered. When the letter is received, make sure to go back into the account and use the code to verify the business.

Set Up Account

- ❑ **Business hours:**

Enter the usual business hours along with exceptions. Under the 'add special hours' section, update hours as necessary for holidays, events, and any other days where the usual hours will be affected. Always stay on top of posted hours if there are ever sudden closures or changes. New customers rely heavily on these hours and expect them to be accurate.
- ❑ **Add pictures:**

The cover, profile, and logo pictures are most important and are seen most in location searches, so upload high quality images that accurately represent the brand. Upload additional pictures of the interior, exterior, team, products, and work. When uploading any picture, name the image file using keywords that include the business category and other preferred keywords.
- ❑ **Completely fill out profile information:**

After filling out the basic info on the business profile, fill out all additional information. It might sound tedious but it will only benefit the business listing. Supply information for the types of payments are or are not accepted, types of handicap accessibility available, etc. And (as explained above) make sure to add additional, more specific categories to the profile. Also, add a menu if applicable. There are two types of menus: food or services.

- **Stay on top of reviews:**

Encourage customers to post reviews/pictures and respond to those reviews. The more reviews (and higher rating average) the better. But make sure all reviews are organic. Google (and potential customers) can tell if a business is 'review stuffing'.

Advanced

- **Hire a Google certified photographer to take 360 degree pictures of the business.**

These can be used as an interactive visual on Google My Business profile.

- **Set up citations (listings) on as many pages as possible with all the same contact and category information.**

(*It's critical that NAP info is accurate and the same on every listing, or else it will hurt rather than help). Examples include Yelp, Bing, yellowpages.com, dexknows.com, Angie's List, and Foursquare. These are only a few examples of hundreds of options.

- **Set up and use Google+ Account:**

A Google+ account can be created through a GMB account. Add a brand description that is simple but encompasses the brand's personality and uses keywords. Make it a quick/easy read with headers, bullets, etc. Once created, post regularly with relevant information, current events, and other articles.